

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Question No: 1**Portfolio:** Attorney-General**Witness:** Ms Louise Anderson, Chief Executive Officer, Court Services Victoria**Committee Member:** Mr Danny O'Brien, Member for Gippsland South**Page of transcript:** 6**Question:**

Danny O'BRIEN: Okay. If I could move onto the backlog, Ms Anderson, with respect to VCAT, the Attorney's presentation indicated that you will clear the residential tenancy backlog at VCAT by November 2024. That is correct, I take it. How many cases are there as at today in VCAT?

Louise ANDERSON: In terms of residential tenancy there are 13,000 pending cases, so as the Attorney mentioned in her opening statement, that is reduction of around 45 per cent since this time last year, when there were around 23,000 cases.

Danny O'BRIEN: And how many are you clearing? I do not know what unit of measurement you might use – weekly or monthly. How many are you actually clearing or dealing with?

Louise ANDERSON: I would need to take that on notice, Mr O'Brien, but I know that there is certainly well over a 100 per cent clearance rate.

Reply:Monthly Residential Tenancy initiations, finalisations and clearance rates

Month	Cases Initiated	Cases Finalised	Monthly Clearance (per cent)
April 2024	4,354	6,514	150
March 2024	4,264	9,338	219
February 2024	4,799	7,923	165
January 2024	4,340	4,653	107
December 2023	3,565	4,081	114
November 2023	4,507	4,264	95
October 2023	4,069	3,970	98



Jaclyn Symes MP
Attorney-General

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Question No: 2

Portfolio: Attorney-General

Witness: The Hon. Jaclyn Symes MP, Attorney-General

Committee Member: Mr Danny O'Brien, Member for Gippsland South

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Question:

Danny O'BRIEN: Correct me if I misunderstood, but you cancelled the PwC contract?

Jaclyn SYMES: I did not.

Danny O'BRIEN: VCAT cancelled the PwC contract?

Jaclyn SYMES: Yes.

Danny O'BRIEN: Was any money sought back from them that had already been paid?

Jaclyn SYMES: I might take that on notice, because –

Danny O'BRIEN: Would Ms Anderson know? Do you know anything about this?

Louise ANDERSON: I think it is appropriate to take it on notice, because it is still a commercial discussion.

Jaclyn SYMES: Yes, that is why. I have asked the same questions, and there is certainly an answer that is available, but I just want to make sure that in the discussions with current providers and the like I do not misstep in relation to that, but certainly they are available.

Reply:

Under contract terms, payments were made upon the completion of services, according to agreed milestones.



Jaclyn Symes MP
Attorney-General

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Question No: 3

Portfolio: Attorney-General

Witness: Ms Kate Houghton, PSM, Secretary

Committee Member: Mr Danny O'Brien, Member for Gippsland South

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Question:

Danny O'BRIEN: Can I ask some data questions, possibly again to CSV or the Secretary? Are you able to advise on the number and category of how many net additional judicial officers and members have been funded in the 2024–25 budget in the following courts and tribunals: the Court of Appeal, Supreme Court, County Court, Magistrates' Court, Coroners Court and VCAT? I am happy for you if you want to take that on notice.

Kate HOUGHTON: Yes, we can take it on notice.

Reply:

The 2024-25 Budget provided funding for one net additional judicial officer as part of the *Enhanced Youth Justice bail supervision and support* initiative. Pending required legislative change, the additional magistrate is expected to be assigned to the Children's Court, commencing in 2025-26.



Jaclyn Symes MP
Attorney-General

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Question No: 4

Portfolio: Attorney-General

Witness: Ms Kate Houghton, PSM, Secretary

Committee Member: Mr Aiv Puglielli, Member for North-Eastern Metropolitan

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Question: Historical homosexual convictions – Given the strong public interest in this data and the fact that Martin Foley, back in the day, would have provided public updates on the scheme, departmentally, will you publish updates on the progress of the scheme, including numbers of applications, both overall numbers and number of successful applications? Could you also provide the current application data within that?

Reply:

Homosexual sex between consenting adults should never have been a crime. The Expungement Scheme was introduced in 2015 and continues to operate to expunge historical convictions for homosexual activity that would not be a criminal offence today.

To protect applicants to the Scheme, a confidentiality provision restricts the Department of Justice and Community Safety's (DJCS) disclosure of information about applications.

DJCS is seeking legal advice about what information, if any, may be provided in response to this question.



Jaclyn Symes MP
Attorney-General